

Many Christians were hostile to pagan science and literature, while for a long time the Christian world produced little to take their place. The pagan poetry, beautiful as it was, was filled with immoral stories of the old gods. This explains in part why the Christians feared contamination from pagan literature. Their attitude was like that of the Puritans of the seventh seventeenth century toward the plays of Shakespeare. The contempt

"Refrain from all writing of the heathens; ... For if thou wilt explore history, thou hast the Books of the Kings; or seekest thou for words of wisdom and eloquence, thou hast the Prophets, Job, and the Book of Proverbs ... Or dost thou long for tuneful strains, thou hast the Psalms; or to explore the origin of things, thou hast the Book of Genesis ... Wherefore abstain scrupulously from all strange and devilish books."

The Christians did not usually attend the public schools until the time of Constantine, and

398

Suppression of Slavery
in Africa.

End 4th Cen A.D.

Smithsonian
June 1993

city of MEROE (NUBIA) declined.